

into account and a suitable teleconference system is implemented.

The seating-order information may be generated such that information belonging to the same group is arranged. In this case, the seating order is changed so as to collect the members of groups.

The seating-order information may also be generated such that information belonging to the same group is dispersed almost uniformly. In this case, the user is provided with an easy-to-converse environment.

When the seating order is changed according to the seating-order information, each communication device may output indication information indicating a change in the seating order to the user, for example, by image information or audio information. In this case, the user can understand that the seating order is to be changed, and the user is prevented from confusing with a change in the seating order.

When the seating order is changed according to grouping, each communication device may output indication information indicating the state of grouping to the user. In this case, the user successfully understands the states of conversation groups. This indication information also helps the user understand the current condition. As the indication information, a background image color may be used, which is one of the most easy-to-understand indications.

The degree of attention may be determined according to user-behavior detection information or information specified by the user. In this case, the degree of attention is suited as a reference for a change in the seating order. More specifically, when the user-behavior detection information includes the lines of sight or a face direction of the user, most suitable control is implemented by the use of a natural operation of the user.

The grouping may be performed according to the statistical relationship between a group structure and the degree of attention which the user of each communication device pays to the information sent from the other communication devices. In this case, the grouping is suited to generate the seating-order information.

Therefore, when a group-determination-table generating method and a group-determination-table generating device according to the present invention hold the statistical relationship, a suitable operation is implemented for changing the seating order.

The foregoing object is achieved in another aspect of the present invention through the provision of a seating-order determination device provided for a communication system having at least three communication devices, including seating-order-information generating means for generating seating-order information at each point of time

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for information sent from each communication device; and transmitting means for sequentially transmitting the seating-order information generated by the seating-order-information generating means to each communication device.

The foregoing object is achieved in still another aspect of the present invention through the provision of a communication device in a communication system including at least three communication devices communicating with each other, including receiving means for receiving information and seating-order information sent from other communication devices; attention-degree-information generating means for detecting the degree of attention which the user pays to the information sent from the other communication devices to generate attention-degree information; transmitting means for transmitting the attention-degree information generated by the attention-degree-information generating means; presenting means for presenting the information sent from the other communication devices; and information manipulation and distribution means for controlling the output positions of the information sent from the other communication devices according to the seating-order information received by the receiving means to output the information sent from the other communication devices in a seating order corresponding to the seating-order information.

The foregoing object is achieved in yet another aspect

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